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ABSTRACT

The transition from college to career is one of the most challenging jobs an individual will experience. This is particularly true for students who have limited work experience. The fact that 50-80% of new college graduates leave their first job within three years may be due to poor career planning and problems inherent in the college-to-work transition. Four dimensions can be considered to influence this process: (1) college versus corporate culture; (2) cognitive development; (3) "successful" and "emotional" intelligence; and (4) competencies. It has been suggested that the first year on the job is so critical that failure to achieve success can negatively impact an individual's career for many years. To counter this situation, preparation should begin in the junior year when a student's interest in a major is gaining strength and when there is time to experience curricular and co-curricular activities. Students need to be challenged to consider their basic assumptions about cultural differences between college and workplace, about cognitive growth, about what constitutes intelligent behavior, and the role of competencies. (Contains 17 references; 1 figure, 3 appendixes; and 2 tables.) (JDM)

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Transition Processes from College to Career

by
Paul Hettich

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TRANSITION PROCESSES FROM COLLEGE TO CAREER

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The transition between college and career is one of the most important and challenging changes an individual experiences, especially students who have limited "real-life" work experiences. According to Holton (1998a), approximately 50 to 80 percent of new college graduates leave their first job within the first three years. Some changes may be due to better opportunities, but many are associated with poor career planning and problems inherent in the college to work transition. As the first of four speakers I will address four of the many dimensions which influence this complex transition: (a) college vs. corporate cultures, (b) cognitive development, (c) "successful" and "emotional" intelligence, and (d) competences. Other dimensions which I deem important but do not have time to consider include workplace preparedness, psychosocial development, learning and motivational issues, interpersonal and group skills, career planning, and skills for independent living.

The Clashing Cultures of Campus and Corporation

Students who have little or no "real world" work experience seldom learn about the dramatic differences between educational and corporate work settings. The issue is not simply a matter of possessing the essential knowledge and skills, it is also successful acculturation and socialization. Holton (1998b) states the problem clearly in a chapter he contributed to John N. Gardner et al's The Senior Year Experience: Facilitating Integration, Reflection, Closure, and Transition.

> The paradox is that although the knowledge acquired in college is critical to graduates' success, the process of succeeding in school is very different from the process of succeeding at work. Many of the skills students developed to be

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> successful in education processes and the behaviors for which they were rewarded are not the ones they need to be successful at work. Worse yet, the culture of education is so different that when seniors continue to have the same expectations of their employers that they did of their college and professors, they are greatly disappointed with their jobs and make costly career mistakes. Despite their best attempts to make adjustments, they cannot adjust for educational conditioning because they are not conscious of it (pp. 100 - 101).

To illustrate these points, study Table 1, Graduates Perceptions of Differences Between College and Work. In general, the terms on the left side characterize the college work culture while those on the right describe the corporate work culture. If students do not have significant "real world" work experiences, it is natural for them to expect the work environment to mimic the educational environment in which they spent at least 16 years of their life.

Although higher education prepares students in basic skills, and organizations use selection procedures that minimize errors, inexperienced students do not know how to focus on the "non-task-related elements of the job - those that surround the task and ultimately determine whether a person succeeds or fails" (Holton, 1992, p. 47). These elements include such challenges as: Fitting into the new culture; learning the unwritten expectations, politics, power and reward structures; building effective working relationships and being accepted as a team member; learning how to accomplish tasks; and earning respect and credibility. Table 1 reflects many of these non-task-related elements.

What are the implications of these differences for teachers? First, promote internships and similar field-based experiences. Second, encourage students to enroll in such courses as organizational behavior, management, group dynamics, and similar courses where workplace dimensions contained in Table 1 are addressed, at least academically. Third, include group-related assignments such as group projects, peer evaluation of class presentations, case studies, and group problem solving. Fourth, invite practicing professionals into the classroom and to career fairs to increase student contact with the workplace. In some schools, alumni "adopt" students and periodically meet with them to

discuss career and professional issues. Fifth, search for resources that address college to workplace issues such as Ed Holton's The Ultimate New Employee Survival Guide (1998a). Finally, recognize that when students expect and receive a structured curriculum (including a detailed, unambiguous syllabus), frequent, quick, and concrete feedback, continuous personal support, right answers, individual (vs. team) effort, and other elements that produce happy students and glowing course evaluations, we could be counter-training them for workplace values and environments that seem different from those we cherish in academia. But what are the tradeoffs for modifying classroom procedures to fit workplace conditions? Are we to become servants of corporations? No, but I believe we owe it to students to help them understand some of the many differences between our workplace and the ones they are likely to encounter with their BA in Psychology.

Cognitive Development of College Students

One of the most important concepts that most students do not learn in college is the stages of cognitive development through which they pass. In the tradition of William Perry (1981), Mary Belenky, Blythe Clinchy, Nancy Goldberger, & Jill Tarule (1997), and Patricia King and Karen Kitchener (1994), Marcia Baxter Magolda (1992) developed an epistemological model that describes the cognitive growth of college students. In a continuing longitudinal, qualitative study of 101 traditional age Miami University (Ohio) women and men begun in 1986, Baxter Magolda identified four levels of knowing: Absolute, Transitional, Independent, and Contextual. Progress through each level is characterized by changes in students' progressively more complex beliefs regarding the certainty of knowledge and the roles of self, authority and peers in the process of knowing.

In the first stage, Absolute Knowing, students believe that knowledge is certain and that absolute answers exist in all areas. The student's role is to memorize, retain and reproduce the knowledge transmitted by an all-knowing instructor. Peers have no significant role given that their knowledge is derived from the instructor/authority. Teachers should be helpful, make the classroom active, help students understand the grading system, and provide opportunities for students to know them.

Transitional Knowing serves as a transition between the certainty of Absolute Knowing and the uncertainty of Independent Knowing. If knowledge seems uncertain in this stage, it is because authorities have not yet found a certain answer, but they will. The instructor's role is to help students understand information so that they no longer rely on rote memory to acquire knowledge. Peers can help by participating in class discussion. In this stage, teachers should encourage students to get involved in class activities, continue to demonstrate care, build in peer involvement, promote thinking over memorization, and introduce contradictory views.

In the stage of Independent Knowing, knowledge is viewed as mostly uncertain. Because knowledge is uncertain, all views (student's and teacher's) are equally valid. However, students must learn to think for themselves; peers should share their views and serve as a source of knowledge. Teachers should try to treat students as equals and develop a genuine relationship with them, encourage students to connect learning with real life experiences, and create opportunities for critical thinking, posing contradictory views, peer collaboration, and freedom of expression.

Baxter Magolda observed gender-related patterns in the first three levels of knowing in her sample. Men tended to learn by mastering information (Absolute Knowing), understanding it through debate or recitation (Transitional Knowing), and focusing on their own independent thinking (Independent Knowing). Women tended to take a private approach to learning through listening and note taking (Absolute Knowing), exchanging ideas with peers and teachers (Transitional Knowing), and by thinking for themselves while seeking the perspectives of others (Independent Knowing). The gender-related patterns appeared to merge in Baxter Magolda's sample during the fourth stage.

In Contextual Knowing, knowledge remains uncertain, but some knowledge claims are better than others when there is evidence to support that claim in a particular context. Contextual knowers must think through issues, compare differing perspectives, integrate new with existing knowledge, and apply it to new contexts. Teachers should design learning to promote contextual thinking, see the "big picture," engage in colleagial relationships with students, and create opportunities for collaboration and mutual responsibility (Baxter Magolda, 1992).

How prominent is each level of knowing during and after college? Figure 1 shows that Absolute Knowing dominates the first year of college and Transitional Knowing the second, third and fourth years (Baxter Magolda, 1992, 1994). Independent Knowing is the predominant mode for 1% of the sophomores, 5% of the juniors, and 16% of the seniors in Baxter Magolda's sample. Contextual knowing was observed in 1% and 2% of the juniors and seniors, respectively. After students graduated, the predominance of Independent Knowing rapidly increased to 57% and 55% during the fifth and sixth years, respectively, while Contextual Knowing improved from 12% to 37% during the fifth and sixth years, respectively (Baxter Magolda, 1994). Although students may acquire considerable information during their last three years, Baxter Magolda's work suggests that their assumptions about knowing do not become more complex.

What happens after graduation that accounts for the rapid growth in Independent and Contextual Knowing? Baxter Magolda conducted post-college interviews with 70 of her 101 participants during the fifth year of the study and with 51 subjects during the sixth year. Most graduates had accepted jobs in such areas as insurance, sales, accounting, teaching, mental health, airlines, and government; thirteen entered graduate or professional school.

Three themes emerged from the interviews with Independent knowers. First, as employees (not students), they were expected to function independently in their job. Second, they were required to learn their job, in part, by gathering information from others. Gone was the Transitional Knowing assumption that peers are not important in the learning process. Third, as employees they learned by direct experience, not by vicarious learning through textbook or teacher examples. As one study participant noted, 'I learned how to become very clear and concise.... I learned to be prepared. I learned that you don't call someone when you don't know what you're talking about. You learn those things in school, but you don't really experience them. You don't experience the consequences or you don't experience the reality' (p. 33, Baxter Magolda, 1994). The major secondary themes that emerged from interviews with Independent knowers include becoming more assertive, reducing others' influence, and receiving support from peers and supervisors to increase self-confidence.

Three major themes emerged from interviews with Contextual knowers which may

explain the increases to 12% and 37% during the first two years after college. Contextual knowers frequently held roles of authority, were required to make subjective decisions (involving uncertainties), and worked collaboratively with others. Secondary themes included stretching beyond one's limits, believing that you are making a contribution, and finding meaning within and beyond the workplace. According to Baxter Magolda, her post-baccalaureate subjects reported that it was the nature of their experiences - the independence and responsibility - rather than the context of the work that was important to them.

In summary, Baxter Magolda's research shows that younger college students proceed through four levels of cognitive development, but the higher levels are not reached until after they leave college and enter the work force or graduate school. What are the implications of these findings for advanced students and their instructors? First, teachers should provide, and students should seek, educational experiences that provide opportunities to analyze and evaluate knowledge gained in lower level classes and develop their beliefs about this knowledge e.g., through synthesizing senior year capstone courses (Baxter Magolda, 1994). The effects of cognitive development on the research participants who continued their education in graduate and professional settings may be found in Baxter Magolda (1996). Second, promote internships, research, and similar experiences which provide specific contexts for testing students' assumptions about knowing, applying their knowledge, and practicing their skills. In undergraduate internships which I supervise, it is common for students to experience all or most of the themes Baxter Magolda observed in her fifth and sixth year students: Direct experience in social service settings with issues that are addressed in their course work; the expectation to act independently with minimal supervision; authority to act independently and, sometimes, make decisions on matters that are often ambiguous; and regular collaboration with supervisors and peers. If internships were a <u>required</u> part of undergraduate education, perhaps higher levels of Independent and Contextual Knowing would be reached earlier than Baxter Magolda's data suggests. Third, encourage students to become involved in co-curricular activities that develop interpersonal, group, leadership, and organizational skills.

Although Baxter Magolda's research was conducted on a homogeneous younger

age sample, it is worthwhile to speculate on what her findings mean for returning adult students. Returning students, especially those who have significant responsibilities in work or family settings would be expected to show higher levels of cognitive development in their course work. It is important to understand their level of knowing, find ways to enhance their cognitive growth, and promote an active student-centered form of learning.

Finally, it is helpful for students to learn about their cognitive development regardless of age and prior experience. Perhaps we can not teach cognitive development, but we can teach about it. In my experience, students are eager to learn about Baxter Magolda's stages and how they and their peers change during and after the university years. This information helps them understand who they were, who they are, and who they can become. Unfortunately, few college textbooks or teachers discuss the cognitive development their readers yearn to learn.

Successful Intelligence

Long before students enter their junior and senior year, most have learned to equate intelligence with logic and analytical thinking and to believe that intelligence is best expressed as a test score. Current thinking challenges this view, not so much for being wrong, but for being incomplete. If students knew that analytical intelligence is essential but often insufficient for success in many work places, they could actively strive to strengthen other dimensions of intelligence during college. Robert Sternberg's triarchic theory of intelligence(1986) proposes componential intelligence (analytic and abstract thinking), experiential intelligence (creative and insightful thinking needed for novel situations), and contextual intelligence (practical thinking for problem solving). Recently, he introduced the concept of Successful Intelligence to refer to these dimensions. According to Sternberg (1996),

> To be successfully intelligent is to think well in three different ways: analytically, creatively, and practically. Typically, only analytical intelligence is valued on tests and in the classroom. ... Analytical thinking is required to solve problems and to judge the quality of ideas. Creative intelligence is required to formulate good problems and ideas in the first place. Practical intelligence is needed to

> use the ideas and their analysis is an effective way in one's everyday life. Successful intelligence is most effective when it balances all three of its analytical, creative, and practical aspects. (pp. 127 - 128)

Analytical intelligence includes problem solving and decision making, but it is not equivalent to academic intelligence as measured by IQ tests. For example, the successfully intelligent person who uses analytical intelligence (a) recognizes problems before they get out of hand; (b) prefers to formulate long-range strategies rather than rush to a solution; (c) seeks accurate, useful information; (d) allocates available resources in a way that maximizes return while balancing risk with reward; (e) monitors, evaluates, and adjusts his decisions; and (f) recognizes his limits and avoids mental traps (Sternberg, 1996).

Creative intelligence is "the ability to go beyond the given to generate novel and interesting ideas" (Sternberg, 1996, p. 191), and often involves making connections (syntheses) that others do not see. Among 12 characteristics of successfully intelligent creative people are their ability to (a) actively seek and later become role models; (b) question assumptions and encourage others to do the same; (c) permit themselves and others to take sensible risks and make mistakes; (d) tolerate ambiguity and encourage others to do the same; (e) allow themselves and others time to think creatively; (f) understand the obstacles they must face and be willing to grow; and (g) recognize the importance of the person-environment fit (Sternberg, 1996).

Practical intelligence deals with real-world tasks, unlike academic tasks which often are well structured, have but one correct answer, and are detached from ordinary experience. Practical intelligence involves tacit knowledge which includes informal heuristics for doing something, and is usually acquired without formal instruction, e.g., purchasing a car or leasing an apartment. People with practical intelligence seek tacit knowledge about a situation or a problem, use it to adapt to the new situation, and are aware that this knowledge may change for other situations.

According to Sternberg, successfully intelligent people are independent, self-motivated and goal-oriented. They make the most of their abilities and know when to persevere. They show initiative, translate thought into action, and follow through. They are willing to delay gratification, risk failure, surmount difficulties, accept fair blame, and avoid self-

pity. Finally, they possess self-confidence, self-efficacy, see the "big picture," and balance their analytical, creative and practical thinking.

Sternberg's view of successful intelligence goes well beyond the traditional academic view measured by paper and pencil tests. His characteristics of successful intelligence have embedded within them self-regulatory skills, intrinsic motivation, and various degrees of perceptiveness and wisdom. Some persons may argue that the theory is too broad in its inclusion of tacit knowing and dimensions of personal maturity. Yet, when we consider the many demands of the workplace that our students will face, Sternberg's concept of successful intelligence generally offers a more comprehensive model of reality than single dimension psychometric based theories of intelligence. In short, the workplace is not simply a sequence of read-write-test-read-write-test events. Yet, the university is an environment where the analytical, creative, and practical components of successful intelligence are ever present. Opportunities to display Successful Intelligence are pervasive, but they are hidden in numerous normal problem solving situations, social interactions, and in the explicit and implicit demands of the classroom. Successful Intelligence is often necessary to achieve high grades and some teachers acknowledge its importance and articulate its dimensions. Many students graduate with a high level of successful intelligence, but many focus exclusively on acquiring high grades. As one "straight A" graduate remarked, "I enjoy the honor of graduating with a perfect 4.0 average, but I sacrificed everything else: social relationships, involvement in clubs, and practical skills." When I last spoke with her, she was a secretary and had been unsuccessful in achieving entry in graduate school.

Emotional Intelligence

Others agree that traditional views of intelligence are incomplete. Peter Salovey and John Mayer (1990) proposed a model of emotional intelligence that contains five domains of abilities: Knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships. Daniel Goleman expanded on Salovey and Mayer's work (Goleman, 1995) and applied emotional intelligence to the workplace (Goleman, 1998). By emotional intelligence Goleman (1995) means

the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating

> ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships. It describes abilities distinct from, but complementary to, academic intelligence, the purely cognitive capacities measured by IQ. (p. 316)

Drawing on research studies and interviews with corporate officials, Goleman concludes that emotional intelligence is more important than IQ for determining success on the job - any job. For example, he analyzed 181 positions from 121 organizations, worldwide, and classified the competencies listed for each job, role, or field into those that required purely cognitive or technical skills and those which required emotional skills. He found that 67% of the abilities required for effective performance were emotional competencies, regardless of the kind of job or organization. Table 2, the Emotional Competence Framework, classifies the five dimensions of emotional intelligence into personal and social, and lists the 25 emotional competencies. Each competence is further defined. For example, persons who possess emotional awareness "know which emotions they are feeling and why; realize the links between their feelings and what they think, do, and say; recognize how their feelings affect their performance; and have a guiding awareness of their values and goals" (Goleman, 1998, p. 54).

Goleman believes that the competences needed to succeed change as a function of the organization, roles performed, and one's position in the corporate hierarchy. Because the emotional competencies are ingrained habits, change is difficult. Telling employees about emotional intelligence may be efficient but it is not very effective. Goleman and his associates developed 15 guidelines for training emotional competence in workplace settings, many of which have their counterparts in university settings. These guidelines include: Assess the job, assess the individual, deliver assessment with care, gauge readiness, motivate, make change self-directed, focus on clear, manageable goals, prevent relapse, give performance feedback, encourage practice, arrange support, provide models, encourage, reinforce change, and evaluate.

The opportunities in a university environment which promote successful intelligence also facilitate the development of emotional intelligence: Classrooms that promote discussion, problem solving, and the exchange of ideas, labs where students must work collaboratively, residence halls where students must learn to live together, social clubs,

study groups, skill-building seminars, and counseling sessions.

Competences

Many students regard higher education as the mastery of course content. However, while they are learning the academic alphabet from Accounting to Zoology, they simultaneously achieve levels of competence (habits) in the Covert Curriculum. The Covert Curriculum consists of those "numerous, routine skill-related activities, behaviors, and attitudes that are transacted inside and outside of classrooms. Collectively, they reflect a student's overall work orientation and habits" (Hettich, 1998, pp. 52 - 53). These experiences are called covert because most students are not aware of the educational significance of their daily activities. The most common examples of the Covert Curriculum include learning strategies such as taking notes legibly, listening attentively, managing time and stress, setting goals, punctuality, improving reading speed and comprehension, and being organized. The Covert Curriculum also includes the interactions students have with teachers, peers, supervisors, family members, and others who shape interpersonal skills. These and similar behaviors are a major part of a student's experience. Although they are not listed in the academic bulletin nor directly reflected on a transcript, the habits and attitudes comprising the Covert Curriculum directly contribute to academic success and later to success in the workplace. In short, they are transferable, life-long skills.

How important is mastery of the Covert Curriculum for the work place? In a study performed by the American Society for Training and Development, Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer (1990) identified seven groups of skills that employers seek. They include

- Learning to learn: the foundation skill on which all others are based
- Reading, writing, and computation: technical skills that employers consider basic for entry and advancement
- Oral communication and listening: skills that enable people to communicate in their jobs
- Problem solving and creative thinking: skills that enable employees to think and act flexibly

- Self-esteem, motivation/goal setting, and employability/career development: developmental skills that help people maintain their job and advance
- Interpersonal skills, teamwork, and negotiation: skills that enable to work together in groups
- Organizational effectiveness and leadership: the 'influencing' skills that help individuals navigate through the organization (Hettich, 1998, p. 56).

Reflect for a moment on your institution's courses in which these skills are taught. Then reflect on those aspects of the total college experience where these skills are not taught in a classroom but are practiced. Examples of the latter include a student's study routine (learning to learn skills), job, campus club (oral communication, listening, interpersonal skills, teamwork, negotiation, leadership), or counseling session (problem solving, motivation/goal setting, career planning). When students realize that success in the workplace includes not only mastery of course content, but also competence in the Covert Curriculum, they have a powerful motivational tool or schema for directing their daily activities. In short, time management, listening, self-discipline, and group skills are good for high grades and good for personal and professional effectiveness. For another perspective on competences consult Evers, Rush, and Berdrow (1998) whose surveys of graduates in corporate settings led to grouping 18 workplace skills into four base competences: Mobilizing innovation and change; managing people and tasks; communicating, and managing self

In conclusion, it is important to reiterate that the transition from college to career is a highly complex and critical period for students. It's not just a matter of finding a job. According to Holton, the first year on the job is so critical that failure to achieve success can negatively impact an individual's career for many years. Preparation should begin during the junior year when a students' commitment to the major is gaining strength and while there is time for the kinds of curricular and co-curricular activities that I have recommended. Students should question their basic assumptions about cultural differences between college and workplace, about cognitive growth, about what constitutes intelligent behavior; and the role of competences.

Writer Alan Harrington remarked in Life in the Crystal Palace (1959) that "We are all,

it seems, saving ourselves for the Senior Prom. But many of us forget that somewhere along the way we must learn to dance." Students who use their last two years wisely to prepare for one of life's most challenging, most frustrating, and most rewarding transitions can dance gracefully to a Promising future.

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Author Note

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Readers are invited to send their comments to paulihettich@mindspring.com.

Table 1

Graduates' Perceptions of Differences Between College and Work*

College	First Year of Work
Highly structured curriculum and programs with lots of direction	Highly unstructured environment and tasks with few directions
Frequent, quick, concrete feedback	Infrequent and less precise
Personally supportive environment	Less personal support
Few significant changes	Frequent and unexpected changes
Flexible schedule	Structured schedule
Frequent breaks and time off	Limited time off
Personal control over time, classes and interests	Responding to others' directions & interests
Intellectual challenge	Organizational and people challenges
Choose your performance level (A, B, and so on)	A-level work required all the time
Focus on your development & growth	Focus on getting results for the organization
Create and explore knowledge	Get results with your knowledge
Individual effort	Team effort
"Right" answers	Few "right" answers
Independence of ideas & thinking	Do it the organization's way
Less initiative required	Lots of initiative required
Professors	Bosses

* Adapted from Holton, E. in Gardner, et al. (1998). The Senior Year Experience: Facilitating Integration, Reflection, Closure, and Transition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. p. 102.

Table 2

The Emotional Competence Framework*

Personal Competence

These competencies determine how we manage ourselves.

Self-Awareness: Knowing one's internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions

- Emotional awareness: Recognizing one's emotions and their effects
- Accurate self-assessment: Knowing one's strengths and limits
- Self-confidence: A strong sense of one's self-worth and capabilities

Self-Regulation: Managing one's internal states, impulses, and resources

- Self-control: Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check
- Trustworthiness: Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity
- Conscientiousness Taking responsibility for personal performance
- Adaptability: Flexibility in handling change
- Innovation: Being comfortable with novel ideas, approaches, and new information

Motivation: Emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals

- Achievement drive: Striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence
- Commitment: Aligning with the goals of the group or organization
- Initiative: Readiness to act on opportunities
- Optimism: Persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks

Social Competence

These competencies determine how we handle relationships.

Empathy: Awareness of others' feelings, needs, and concerns

- Understanding others: Sensing others' feelings and perspectives, and taking an active interest in their concerns
- Developing others: Sensing others' development needs and bolstering their abilities
- Service orientation: Anticipating, recognizing, and meeting customers' needs

Service orientation: Anticipating, recognizing, and meeting customers' needs

Leveraging diversity: Cultivating opportunities through different kinds of people

Political awareness: Reading a group's emotional currents and power relationships

Social Skills: Adeptness at inducing desirable responses in others

Influence: Wielding effective tactics for persuasion

Communication: Listening openly and sending convincing messages

Conflict management: Negotiating and resolving disagreements

Leadership: Inspiring and guiding individuals and groups

Change catalyst: Initiating or managing change

Building bonds: Nurturing instrumental relationships

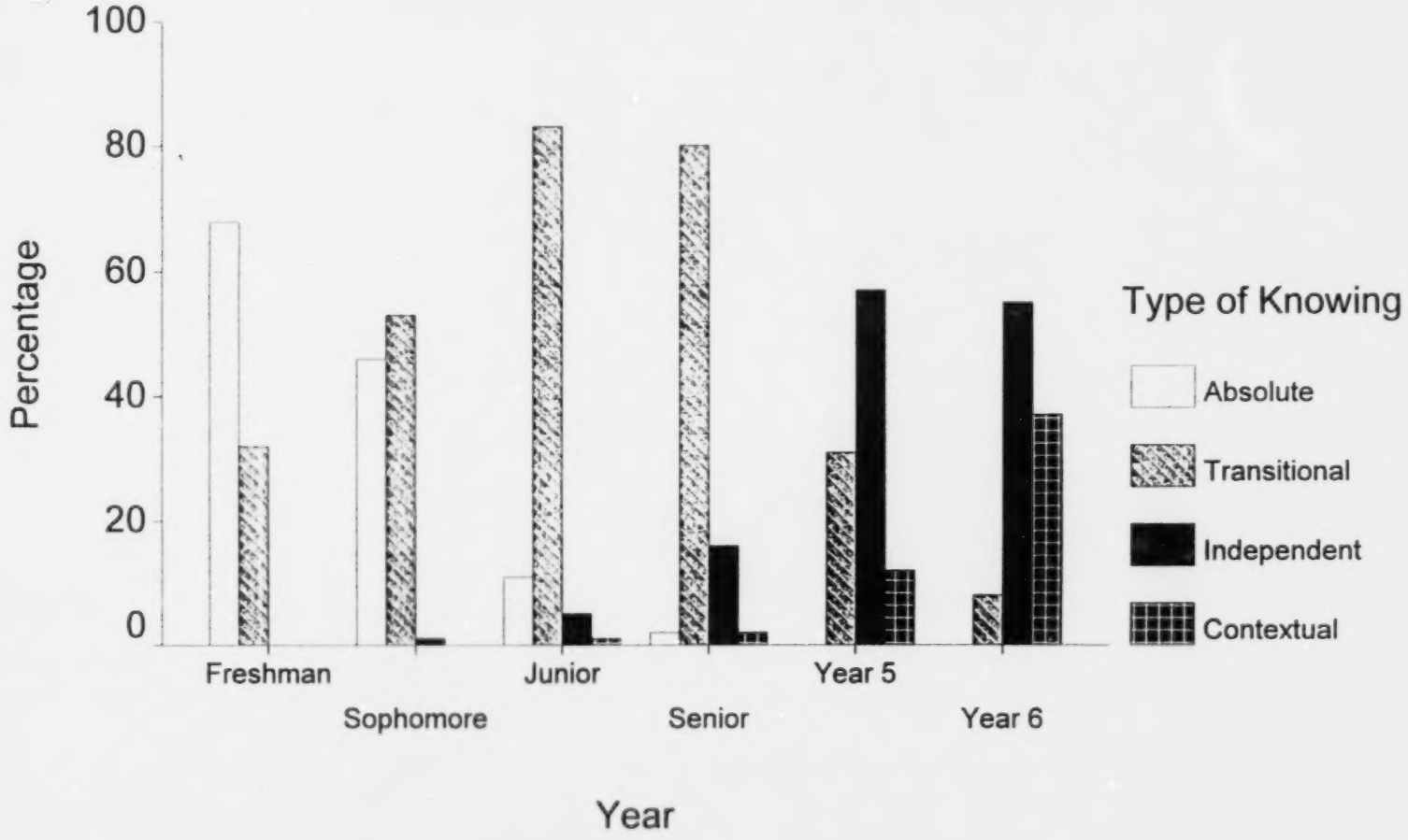
Collaboration and cooperation: Working with others toward shared goals

Team Capabilities: Creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals

* From Goleman, D. (1998). Working With Emotional Intelligence. New York: Bantam Books. pp. 26-27.

Figure 1.

Predominant Ways of Knowing by Year



Adapted from: Baxter Magolda (1992, 1994)

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THEMES THAT CHARACTERIZE POST-COLLEGE EXPERIENCES IN JOBS AND POST-BACCALAUREATE SETTINGS

Independent Knowers (from 16% senior year to 57% fifth year and 55% sixth year)

- ◇ **being expected to function independently**
- ◇ **learning by gathering information from others**
- ◇ **learning through direct experience**

secondary themes:
becoming more assertive
reducing others' influence
receiving support from peers and supervisors to increase self-confidence

Contextual Knowers (from 2% senior year to 12% fifth year and 57% sixth year)

- ◇ **making subjective decisions in their work**
- ◇ **taking the role of authority**
- ◇ **collaborating with coworkers**
- ◇ **secondary themes:**
"can do" attitude: stretching beyond your limits
believing that you are making a contribution
finding meaning in work within and beyond the work place

Baxter Magolda, M. B. (1994). Post-college experiences and epistemology. Review of Higher Education, 18, 25-44.

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SUCCESSFUL INTELLIGENCE

Definition: "To be successfully intelligent is to think well in three different ways: analytically, creatively, and practically." (Sternberg, 1996. p. 127)*

Successfully intelligent people using <u>analytical intelligence</u>
- recognize problems early; define them correctly; solve them selectively
- formulate long-range strategies and avoid hasty solutions
- monitor and evaluate decisions and correct errors immediately
- think heuristically; incubate problems; use creative strategies solving them
- recognize limits of rationality; are aware of traps

Successfully intelligent people using <u>creative intelligence</u>
- question assumptions and encourage others to do the same
- take sensible risks and permit themselves and others to make mistakes
- allow themselves time to think creatively ; seek tasks that allow creativity
- tolerate ambiguity; recognize the importance of person-environment fit
- actively seek out and later become role models

Successfully intelligent people using <u>practical intelligence</u>
- use tacit knowledge (informally acquired heuristics) to deal with problems; are aware that new situations may require different heuristics

Characteristics of successfully intelligent people
Successfully intelligent people
- are initiators who motivate themselves
- learn to control their impulses; delay gratification
- know when to persevere; seek to surmount personal difficulties
- know how to make the most of their abilities
- translate thought into action; do not procrastinate
- complete tasks and follow through
- are not afraid to risk failure; accept fair blame; reject self-pity
- are independent and focus on goals
- balance analytical, creative and analytical thinking
- possess self-confidence and self-efficacy

* From R. J. Sternberg (1996). <u>Successful intelligence: How practical and creative intelligence determine success in life</u>. New York: Simon & Schuster.

THE COVERT CURRICULUM

Covert Curriculum

"...those numerous, routine skill-related activities, behaviors, and attitudes that are transacted inside *and* outside of classrooms. Collectively, they reflect a student's overall work orientation and habits" (p. 52)*

Examples

- taking organized and legible notes
- listening attentively in class
- increasing your reading speed and comprehension
- maintaining an appointment book/diary

- periodically examining your goals and values
- learning how to cope with stress
- accepting responsibility for your behavior
- working effectively in a group

Workplace Basics: The Essential Skills Employers Want by Carnevale, A. P., Gainer, L. J., & Melter, A. S. (1990). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- learning to learn: the foundation skill on which all others are based
- reading, writing, and computation: technical skills that employers consider basic for entry and advancement
- oral communication and listening: skills that enable people to communicate in their jobs
- problem solving and creative thinking: skills that enable employees to think and act flexibly
- self-esteem, motivation/goal setting, and employability/career development: developmental skills that help people maintain their job and advance
- interpersonal skills, teamwork, and negotiation: skills that enable people to work together in groups
- organizational effectiveness and leadership: the "influencing" skills that help individuals navigate through the organization

* From Hettich, P. (1998). Learning Skills for College and Career (2 ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.